

U.S. President's Commission on the Assassination of  
President Kennedy . Volume V.

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protection of the President, and have it admitted to this record? under that number.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; it may be.

Representative FORD. Also a number for this letter Mr. Hoover is going to submit.

Mr. RANKIN. May I assign 867?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

(Commission Exhibit Nos. 866 and 867 were marked for identification and received in evidence.)

✓ TESTIMONY OF JOHN A. McCONE AND RICHARD M. HELMS

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order.

Director McCONE, it is customary for the Chairman to make a short statement to the witness as to the testimony that is expected to be given. I will read it at this time.

Mr. McCONE will be asked to testify on whether Lee Harvey Oswald was ever an agent, directly or indirectly, or an informer or acting on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency in any capacity at any time, and whether he knows of any credible evidence or of any conspiracy either domestic or foreign involved in the assassination of President Kennedy, also with regard to any suggestions and recommendations he may have concerning improvements or changes in provisions for the protection of the President of the United States.

Would you please rise and be sworn? Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. McCONE. I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you be seated, please? Mr. Rankin will conduct the examination.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. McCONE, will you state your name?

Mr. McCONE. My name is John Alex McCONE.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have an official position with the U.S. Government?

Mr. McCONE. Yes, sir; I am Director of Central Intelligence.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you been Director for some time?

Mr. McCONE. Yes; a little over 2½ years.

Mr. RANKIN. Where do you live, Mr. McCONE?

Mr. McCONE. I live at 3025 Whitehaven Street in Washington.

Mr. RANKIN. Are you familiar with the records and how they are kept by the Central Intelligence Agency as to whether a man is acting as an informer, agent, employee, or in any other capacity for that Agency?

Mr. McCONE. Yes; I am generally familiar with the procedures and the records that are maintained by the Central Intelligence Agency. Quite naturally, I am not familiar with all of the records because they are very extensive.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you determined whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald, the suspect in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy, had any connection with the Central Intelligence Agency, informer or indirectly as an employee, or any other capacity?

Mr. McCONE. Yes; I have determined to my satisfaction that he had no such connection, and I would like to read for the record—

Mr. RANKIN. Will you tell us briefly the extent of your inquiry?

Mr. McCONE. In a form of affidavit, I have gone into the matter in considerable detail personally, in my inquiry with the appropriate people within the Agency, examined all records in our files relating to Lee Harvey Oswald. We had knowledge of him, of course, because of his having gone to the Soviet Union, as he did, putting him in a situation where his name would appear in our name file. However, my examination has resulted in the conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was not an agent, employee, or informant of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Agency never contacted him, interviewed him, talked with him, or received or solicited any reports or information from him, or communicated with him directly or in any other manner. The Agency never fur-

nished him with any in any fashion, and directly or indirectly the term "Agency."

Representative FORD. States, in the Soviet Mr. McCONE. Any Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Commission in conn Mr. McCONE. Yes to you.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. introduced in evidence this record.

The CHAIRMAN. I (Commission Exhibit evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Would an agent or informant have to pass through

Mr. McCONE. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Will could you tell us how

Mr. McCONE. Mr. Agency's activities permissible?

Mr. RANKIN. Could

The CHAIRMAN.

The CHAIRMAN.

solemnly swear that shall be the truth, God?

Mr. HELMS. I do.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr.

Could you answer that?

Mr. HELMS. Yes.

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Mr. HELMS. Yes.

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nished him with any funds or, any or compensated him directly or indirectly in any fashion, and Lee Harvey Oswald was never associated with the Agency, directly or indirectly in any way whatsoever with the Agency. When I use the term "Agency," I mean the Central Intelligence Agency, of course.

Representative FORD. Does that include whether or not he was in the United States, in the Soviet Union, or anyplace?

Mr. McCONE. Anyplace; the United States, Soviet Union, or anyplace.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. McCONE, is that the affidavit you are going to supply the Commission in connection with our request for it?

Mr. McCONE. Yes; this is the substance of the affidavit which I will supply to you.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Chairman, I ask leave to mark that Exhibit 870 and have it introduced in evidence as soon as we receive it from Mr. McCONE as a part of this record.

The CHAIRMAN. It may be admitted.

(Commission Exhibit No. 870 was marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Would you tell us about your procedures in regard to having an agent or informer or any person acting in that type of capacity? Does that have to pass through your hands or come to your attention in the Agency?

Mr. McCONE. No; it does not have to come through my personal hands.

Mr. RANKIN. Without disclosing something that might be a security matter, could you tell us how that is handled in a general way in the Agency?

Mr. McCONE. Mr. Helms, who is directly responsible for that division of the Agency's activities as a Deputy Director, might explain. Would that be permissible?

Mr. RANKIN. Could we have him sworn then?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you raise your right hand and be sworn. Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. HELMS. I do.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Helms, you heard the inquiry just directed to Mr. McCONE. Could you answer the question directly?

Mr. HELMS. Yes; we have a specific procedure which we follow in all cases where the Agency is in contact, for the purposes of acquiring intelligence or whatever the case may be, with an individual. We not only have a record of the individual's name, but we also usually get information of a biographical nature. We then check this individual's name against our record. At that point we make a determination as to whether we desire to use this man or not to use him. It varies from case to case as to how many officers may be involved in approving a specific recruitment. May I go off the record?

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Helms, did you have anything to do on behalf of your Agency with determining whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald was acting in any of the capacities I have described in my questions to Mr. McCONE?

Mr. HELMS. Yes; I did.

Mr. RANKIN. Will you tell us what you did in that regard?

Mr. HELMS. On Mr. McCONE's behalf, I had all of our records searched to see if there had been any contacts at any time prior to President Kennedy's assassination by anyone in the Central Intelligence Agency with Lee Harvey Oswald. We checked our card files and our personnel files and all our records.

Now, this check turned out to be negative. In addition I got in touch with those officers who were in positions of responsibility at the times in question to see if anybody had any recollection of any contact having even been suggested with this man. This also turned out to be negative, so there is no material in the Central Intelligence Agency, either in the records or in the mind of any of the individuals, that there was any contact had or even contemplated with him.

MR. RANKIN. MR. HELMS—  
MR. DULLES. Could I ask one question there? Do you recall or do you know at what time the name of Lee Harvey Oswald was carded first came to your  
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MR. HELMS. Sir, I would want to consult the record to be absolutely accurate, but it is my impression that the first time that his name showed up on any Agency records was when he went to the Soviet Union.

MR. RANKIN. Mr. Helms, in connection with your work you have supplied information to the Commission and we have requested many things from your Agency. Can you tell the Commission as to whether or not you have supplied us all the information the Agency has, at least in substance, in regard to Lee Harvey Oswald?

MR. HELMS. We have; all.

Representative FORD. Has a member of the Commission staff had full access to your files on Lee Harvey Oswald?

MR. HELMS. He has, sir.

Representative FORD. They have had the opportunity to personally look at the entire file?

MR. HELMS. We invited them to come out to our building in Langley and actually put the file on the table so that they could examine it.

THE CHAIRMAN. I was personally out there, too, and was offered the same opportunity. I did not avail myself of it because of the time element, but I was offered the same opportunity.

MR. RANKIN. Mr. Helms, can you explain, according to the limitations of security, the reasons why we examined materials but did not always take them, in a general way?

MR. HELMS. Yes; I can.

In our communications between individuals working overseas and in Washington, we for security reasons have a method of hiding the identities of individuals in telegrams and dispatches by the use of pseudonyms and cryptonyms. For this reason, we never allow the original documents to leave our premises. However, on the occasion when the representatives of the Commission staff looked at these files, we sat there and identified these pseudonyms and cryptonyms and related them to the proper names of the individuals concerned, so that they would know exactly what the correspondence said.

MR. RANKIN. By that you mean the representatives of the Commission were able to satisfy themselves that they had all of the information for the benefit of the Commission without disclosing matters that would be a threat to security; is that right?

MR. HELMS. It is my understanding that they were satisfied.

Representative FORD. Mr. McCone, do you have full authority from higher authority to make full disclosure to this Commission of any information in the files of the Central Intelligence Agency?

MR. MCCONE. That is right. It is my understanding that it is the desire of higher authority that this Commission shall have access to all information of every nature in our files or in the minds of employees of Central Intelligence Agency.

Representative FORD. On the basis of that authority, you or the Agency have made a full disclosure?

MR. MCCONE. That is correct.

MR. RANKIN. Mr. Helms, I have handed you Exhibits 868 and 869 directed to you acting for the Agency, the first one being from the Commission to you and the second one, 869, being your answer in regard to your full and complete disclosure in regard to your records; isn't that correct?

MR. HELMS. That is correct. May I say, Mr. Rankin, that any information, though, subsequent to this correspondence which we may obtain we will certainly continue to forward to the Commission.

MR. RANKIN. Thank you. Mr. Chief Justice, I ask leave to have those two exhibits, 868 and 869, received in evidence at this time.

THE CHAIRMAN. They may be admitted under those numbers.

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